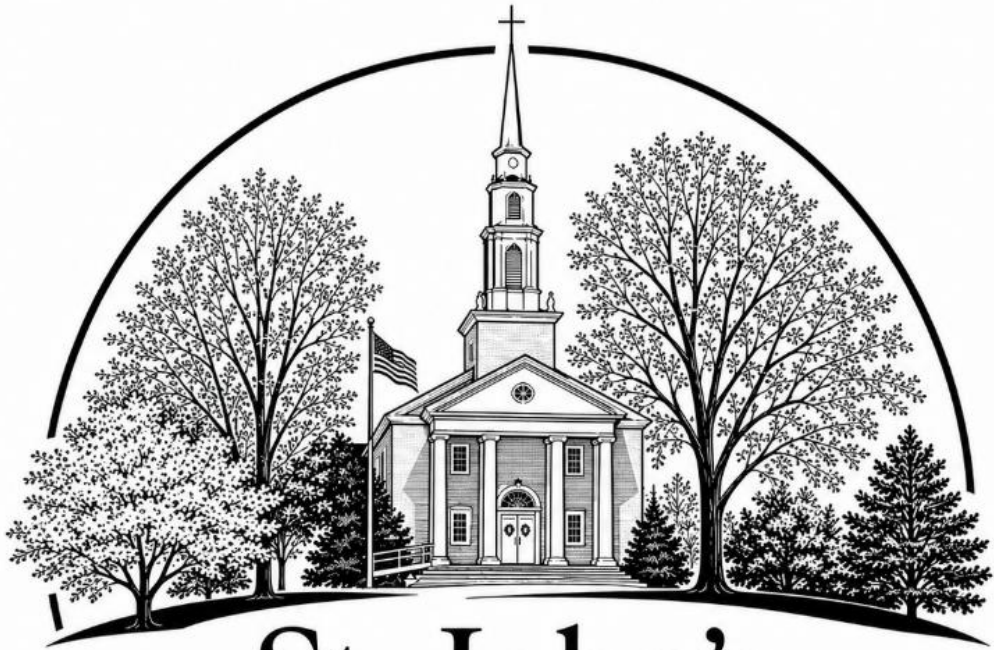




St. John's Lutheran Church

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STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 20, 2026 | 10:30am

Welcome to St. John's. We invite you to join us as an active participant in the worship of God.

PRELUDE Allegro non troppo (Concert No. 1 in A minor) by Camille Saint-Saëns
Peter Bartels, Cello

We stand.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

We kneel or stand. Silence is kept for reflection.

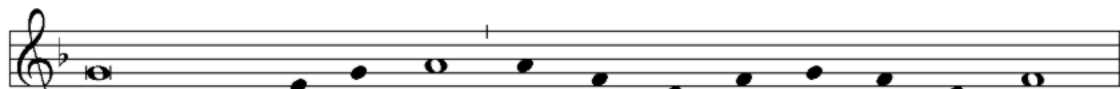
Most merciful God,
we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

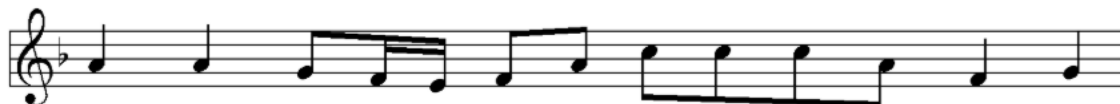
GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

GLORIA



A Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his peo - ple on earth.



B Lord God, heav - en - ly king, al - might - y God and Fa - ther:



We wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God:



You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



You are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther; re - ceive our prayer.



PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Lord God, you call us to work in your vineyard and leave no one standing idle. Set us to our tasks in the work of your kingdom, and help us to order our lives by your wisdom; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We sit.

WORD

FIRST READING

JONAH 3:10-4:11

A reading from Jonah

When God saw what the people of Nineveh did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. He prayed to the Lord and said, "O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God

and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

The Lord God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” Then the Lord said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

PSALM 145:1-8



1 I will exalt you, my | God and king,
and bless your name forev- | er and ever.

**2 Every day | will I bless you
and praise your name forev- | er and ever.**

3 Great is the Lord and greatly | to be praised!
There is no end | to your greatness.

**4 One generation shall praise your works | to another
and shall de- | clare your power.**

5 I will speak of the glorious splendor | of your majesty
and all your | marvelous works.

**6 They shall tell of the might of your | wondrous acts,
and I will re- | count your greatness.**

7 They shall publish the remembrance of | your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully | of your righteousness.

**8 The Lord is gracious and full | of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.**

SECOND READING

PHILIPPIANS 1:21-30

A reading from Philippians

To me, living is Christ and dying is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well-- since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

We stand.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL

MATTHEW 20:1-16

The holy gospel according to St Matthew, the twentieth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

We sit.

**CHILDREN'S SERMON
SERMON**

REV. MARTHA MCCREIGHT

We stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lord of All Nations Grant Me Grace

HYMN 716

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.*
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen

**Or, He descended to the dead.*

We kneel or sit for the prayers.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each intercession ends with these words:

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

We stand.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

We sit.

GREETINGS

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us,
an offering and sacrifice to God.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Love Never Fails* K. Lee Scott

To support the mission and ministry of St. John's, you can give online at
www.stjohnelca.org *or scan the QR code above.*

We stand.

MEAL

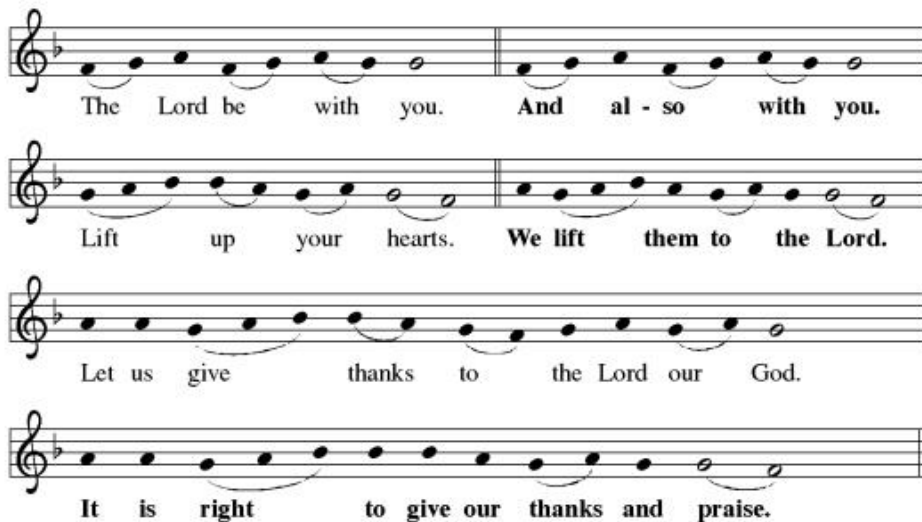


HYMN AT THE PRESENTATION

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our
cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the
prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

The musical score is written on six staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below each staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line on the final staff.

GREAT THANKSGIVING



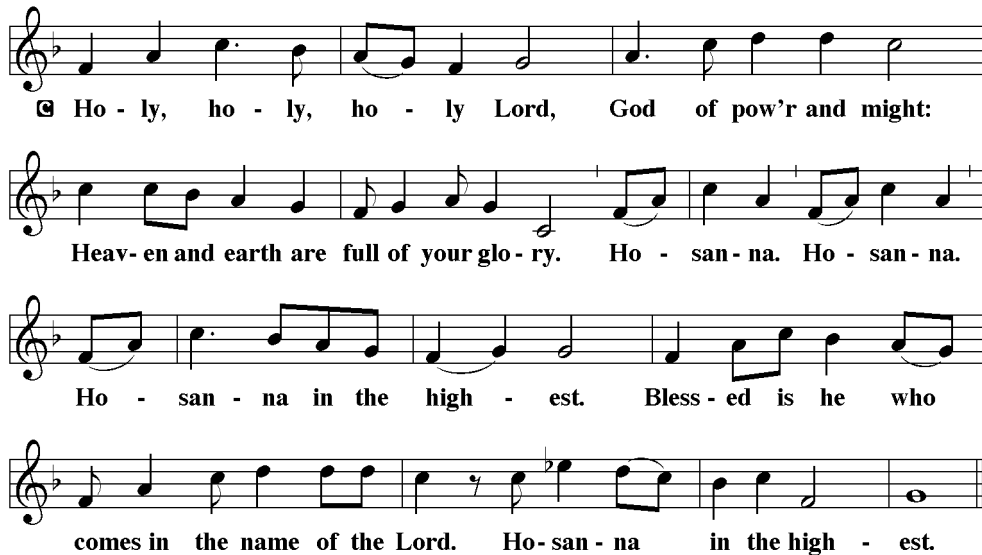
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Here the minister continues with preface for the day, concluding: we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



☞ Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:

Heav- en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho - san - na.

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who

comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God;
you are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.
You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
that whoever believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.
Having come into the world, he fulfilled for us your holy will
and accomplished our salvation.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,
his life-giving Passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension, and his promise to come again,
we give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty,
not as we ought, but as we are able;
and we implore you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving,
and, with your Word and Holy Spirit, to bless us, your servants,
and these your own gifts of bread and wine;
that we and all who share in the body and blood of your Son
may be filled with heavenly peace and joy,
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be sanctified in soul and body,
and have our portion with all your saints.

All honor and glory are yours, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
in your holy Church, now and forever.

Amen

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

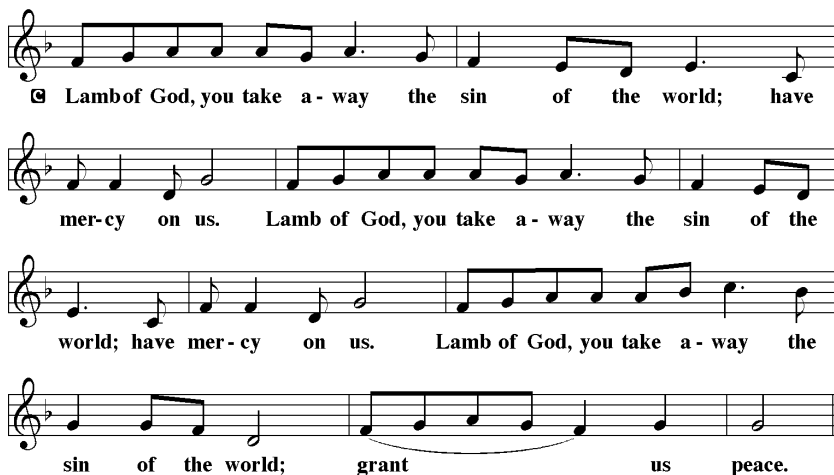
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

All who believe that Jesus is present in the bread and wine, forgiving sins, and promising eternal life, are welcome at the Table of the Lord. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

We sit.

LAMB OF GOD



☩ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN

Lord of Feasting and of Hunger

CARL SCHALK

We stand.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

HYMN AT THE PROCESSION

Love Divine All Loves Excelling

HYMN 631

DISMISSAL

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God

POSTLUDE

Allegro (Sonata 1)

Felix Mendelssohn

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Worship Leaders Today

Celebrant & Preacher	The Rev. Martha McCreight
Organist	Stephen Rapp
Worship Assistant	Michele Effren
Reader	
Communion Assistant	
Acolyte	
Usher	
Altar Committee	Eva Jakubek, Cheryl Milukas
Counters	Lois Coffin, Gary Esposito, Barbara Gleckler
Little Free Pantry	Cathy & Mike Mahler
Coffee Hour	Michele Effren, Barbara Gleckler, Cathy & Mike Mahler

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wednesday, September 23

12:00 noon Weekly Eucharist - Chapel

4:30 pm Confirmation Class

Friday, September 25

6:00 pm - Beer & Hymns

St. Francis Episcopal Church

Saturday, September 26

9:00 am - Pumpkins Arrive

Confirmation Class Service Project



UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, September 27

8:30 am & 10:30 am Worship

Wednesday, September 30

12:00 noon Weekly Eucharist – Chapel

WE NEED YOU!

ACOLYTE SIGN-UP



WORSHIP ASSISTANTS, COMMUNION ASSISTANTS, READERS, USHERS, COFFEE HOUR, AND LFP SIGN-UP



This week we pray for . . . Andrew, Beryl, Cat, Cody, Gary, Gerald, James, Julie, Marie, Sandra, Shirley, Toby, and Valerie. If you have someone to add to the prayer list, please email the parish office. |

Contact Pr Martha for pastoral needs at 406-565-3592. |

Parish Office: parishoffice@sjlcstamford.com |

Pastor Martha: MMcCreight@sjlcstamford.com |

Finance: finance@sjlcstamford.com



We are delighted to have you with us today! To help us keep track of our cherished visitors, we kindly ask that you sign the visitor book located in the Narthex. This small gesture allows us to connect with you and offer any assistance you may need. Additionally, our ushers are more than happy to provide guidance and answer any questions you might have during worship. Whether you're here for the first time or returning, we hope you feel welcomed.



Busy bags are in the Narthex for your little ones to enjoy. These bags are thoughtfully prepared to keep children engaged during the service. Additionally, we invite you to explore and make use of the Pray ground area at the back of the Sanctuary and/or the Nursery, both designed to provide a welcoming and enriching environment for our young attendees. We hope these resources help create a meaningful and enjoyable experience for your family.

Mission Statement

All are welcome! We share Christ's love, grow in faith, and serve others.

BEER & HYMNS

SEPTEMBER 25 - 6:00 PM

ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

2810 LONG RIDGE ROAD - STAMFORD, CT

THIS YEAR, WE WILL JOIN ST. FRANCIS FOR A FUN FELLOWSHIP EVENT

- **BRING FOOD AND BEVERAGE OF YOUR CHOICE.**
- **ENJOY THE CONVERSATION AND MUSIC!**
- **THE EVENT IS FREE.**

BRING FAMILY AND FRIENDS!





Everyone's Help Needed At the Patch

On Saturday, September 26, we will unload the semi-truck of pumpkins for the Pumpkin Patch. We need everyone's help to unload the truck starting at 9:00 am. If you have a wheelbarrow, please bring it and wear gloves to handle the pumpkins. If you are unable to physically handle pumpkins, come anyway for the fellowship. Young and old are most welcome!

Please don't forget to sign up to work at the Patch throughout October...all help is needed.

This project is an all congregation effort. All of the funds raised are given away to Building One Community, Kids In Crisis, and Future Five. As such, it is the biggest mission project of the year for St. John's.

Don't delay signing up – do it now. Thank you!



GIVING WITH LOVE

Our 2026 Giving Intention Campaign

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Mark 12:31

This fall, St. John’s will begin a six-week journey of faith, gratitude, generosity, and love.

How do we love our neighbors through St. John’s?

Our gifts help make possible the worship, care, fellowship, outreach, and ministry we share together.

♥ **Why St. John’s matters**

♥ **Giving with ease and consistency**

♥ **Why Giving Intentions matter**

♥ **Making faithful commitments**

Giving with Intention. Giving with Gratitude. Giving with Love.